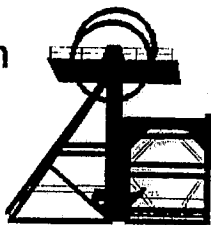


**NAMHO**  
National Association  
of Mining History  
Organisations



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NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 1995

Editor: Wes Taylor, 18 Station Lane, Walton on Trent,  
Swadlincote, Derbys, DE12 8NA.

NAMHO CONFERENCE 1995

The 1995 NAMHO Conference will be held from 14th - 17th July 1995. It will be hosted by the Shropshire Caving and Mining Club and will be based at the Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Newport, Shropshire. There are excellent facilities for accommodation, lectures, sporting and social activities.

The Conference Fee will be £15.00 per person but for bookings received after 15th June there will be a surcharge of £5.00.

The Conference will incorporate a full and varied programme to include a variety of lectures and seminars on mining history related subjects, together with surface and underground field trips. The underground trips will vary from easy to difficult grade with the difficult trips using SRT techniques.

There will be an informal Social Gathering on the Saturday evening

Very good accommodation, (most rooms with en-suite facilities, tea making facilities and colour TV), is available on site at a rate of £17.50 B & B. All other meals are also available on the site but these require booking in advance. A camping and caravan site will also be available in the grounds of the hall. The cost for the camp site is £3.50 per person per night.

This is a very well organised Conference with a large cross section of speakers and activities. Further details of the conference and booking forms are available from either Adrian Pearce, 72 Hopkins Heath, Shawbirch, Telford, Shropshire, TF5 0LZ, Tel:- (01952) 405369 or Wes Taylor, Newsletter Editor. For further details of the underground trips please contact Steve Holding, tel:- (01952) 417483.

FUTURE CONFERENCE AND FIELD MEET

The next NAMHO Field Meet is due to be held in 1996 with a NAMHO Conference due to be held in 1997. At the moment the location of these events has not been agreed.

Would any NAMHO member organisation, or group of organisations in a particular area, who would like to host one of these events, please contact the Secretary of NAMHO as soon as possible.

DIVERSION OF FOOTPATHS

A question has recently been raised as to what happens to public footpaths around quarries when the quarry is expanded.

Without getting too involved in the minefield of planning regulations, the short answer is:-

A quarry cannot expand beyond the boundary specified in the relevant planning consent and as such the footpath is safe from destruction. If, however, the quarry owner applies for planning permission to expand the area of working of the quarry, then an application to divert the footpath must also be made. It is unlikely that the planning consent to expand the quarry would be granted until the question of the footpath diversion had been resolved.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT PUBLICATIONS

The following DRAFT guidelines and guidance notes have been received from the Department of the Environment for comment by NAMHO.

1. Mineral Planning Guidance Note No 13 - Peatworking (Draft)

2. Mineral Planning Guidance Note No 14 - Silica Sands in England. Draft, December 1994.

3. Mineral Planning Guidance Note No 1 General considerations and the Development Plan System-Revised consultation, January 1995

4. Planning Policy Guidance Note No 14, Annexe 1 - Development on Unstable Land, Landslides and planning - Draft consultation, December 1994.

5. Radon, Methane, Carbon Dioxide, Oil and Potentially harmful element concentrations from natural sources and mining. February 1995.

(NB: Mineral Planning Guidance Note No 12 - Treatment of disused mine openings - was published in 1994)

Loan copies of these draft documents are available from Dr I J Brown, NAMHO Chairman.  
Tel:- (01924) 257137.

## **BOOK REVIEW**

"To be a Gypsum Miner" by Carl R Rogers.  
Published by the Pentland Press Ltd: x+183pp.  
ISBN 1 85821 189 1. Cost £9.50.

Carl Rogers started work in Stamphill Mine Well Drift (Cumbria) in 1968, transferring to the nearby Birks Head Mine in 1969. He moved to Longriggs Mine in 1972 and worked at that mine until 1987 when he was appointed to the post of Mine Superintended at Newbiggin Mine, a post he held until 1993. All of these mines, worked for gypsum and some anhydrite, were near to Kirkby Thore (NY6325) in the Eden Valley in Cumbria. Newbiggin (NY630270) was a short distance to the north west. Longriggs (NY654257) and Birks Head 22(NY668258) were in the same neighbourhood and are listed as "still working" in the British geological Survey's "Directory of Mines and Quarries, 1994". The deposits mined are within the Permian Eden Shales.

Rogers notes that the workforce at the Cumbrian gypsum mines declined from +200 in 1968 to 17 in 1994. The principal use for the gypsum was the manufacture of plaster board for interior building works.

The author deals largely with gypsum mining from the faceworker's point of view and he gives a vivid description of his first few weeks in a strange workplace. A significant number of workers had moved from lead or barytes mines to work the

gypsum. The book well covers the human and social side of mining but what makes the book so attractive is the wealth of technical detail of how the face was blasted and of the underground equipment that was used in the industry.

Readers may need some preliminary understanding of the technicalities of blasting and stone handling to be able to follow the technical descriptions in the book. The author does tend to introduce such terms as "zero dets" and "ANFO" (presumably an ammonium nitrate / fuel oil explosive) and assumes that the terms will be instantaneously understood. Eventually, most of the technical terms are explained in quite simple terms. The book also contains numerous annotated sketches and line drawings to illustrate aspects of mine development, shot firing and associated equipment.

The book is not well-structured, it has no index and there is no guide for further reading on the subject. There are no photographs, no location maps or grid references. It is, nevertheless, a valuable first hand insider's account of mining in an industry sector which is seldom in the public eye and on which there is so little published literature.

The book is likely to be of interest to mining historians in general and to industrial archaeologists and historians in the gypsum mining districts which include Cumbria, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Sussex. The text is a most welcome complement to the existing books on the gypsum and plaster board industry. Carl Rogers' account, with all its faults, is highly recommended for those who would like to know what was actually done underground, and how it was done.

Paul W Sowan

(Reviewer's Note:- "The History of BPB Industries" by David Jenkins (1973) and "A saga of British Industry. The story of the British Plaster Board Group" by John Routley (1959) provide an overview from a management viewpoint and contain plenty of photographs of the directors and managers of the Company.)

## **NATIONAL STATUS FOR COAL MUSEUM**

Following a recent review of Caphouse Mining Museum by the Museums and Galleries Commission, the museum is to become the National Coal Mining Museum of England. The Museum will now house the British Coal collection of 1,500 items, including coalface equipment and valuable documents.

(Abstract from Yorkshire Evening Post-16/3/95)

## EMAIL ADDRESSES

In the age of the computer, EMail addresses are becoming popular for passing information electronically. The following organisations within MAMHO now have EMail addresses and these will be shown on future membership lists. If any other NAMHO organisation have an EMail address (or a member who is willing to act as postman), then please send the details to Adrian Pearce.

### NAMHO

namho@lake22.demon.co.uk  
Shropshire Caving & Mining Club  
scmc@lake22.demon.co.uk  
Northern Mines Research Society  
S.Bassham@mcs.salford.ac.uk

## MONUMENTS PROTECTION PROGRAMME

English Heritage is currently reviewing sites of industrial archaeological interest with a view to scheduling the most important sites. Instead of looking at mining as a whole, they are looking at different sectors, eg lead, copper, coal etc and this means that they deal with mining aspects as well as surface treatment, transport etc, of the sector at the same time. Unfortunately, it sometimes means that a mine is considered several times, eg for lead, for zinc and for barytes etc!

What basically happens is that English Heritage gives a contract to a consultant to do investigational work and recommend suitable sites for scheduling. There are several "Steps" in this system which involve reports and consultation with local groups and individuals who can supply information. Recent work has been done for lead, copper, zinc, coal, iron and vein minerals. If you have not been consulted on mine sites for your area and you wish to have an input, then try contacting David Cranstone, 267 Kells Lane, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE4 5HV. Tel:- (01914) 914331.

## NCA MEMBERSHIP/INSURANCE

Following the resignation of NAMHO from NCA, we have been told that our member organisations will not be able participate in the insurance scheme from October 1995, unless they are themselves members of either BCRA or a NCA regional body. In order not to penalise our member organisations it was decided at the last council meeting to try to re-negotiate membership of NCA if we could do so at a cheaper rate. The current level of subscription to NCA is £385 per annum.

Adrian Pearce has been mandated to do the negotiations and you will be informed of the outcome. If successful, all member clubs will again be entitled to participate in the insurance scheme.

We are not renewing the NAMHO membership of BCRA because the membership does not now give our member clubs entitlement to join in the insurance scheme whereas membership of NCA will give this facility.

## REGIONALLY IMPORTANT MINERAL HERITAGE SITES

A meeting was held on 18th March 1995 to discuss this proposal that had been submitted by Geoff Cox. It was decided that it would not be practical to develop the project since the costs of site restoration would be large and there was the problem of liability in encouraging the public to visit a site with mine openings. Instead, it was decided to draw up some NAMHO guidelines on what methods already existed for the protection of sites and which organisations with whom the local groups should be encouraged to liaise. We should be encouraging local groups to identify regional sites of importance and to protect these sites.

## PRODUCTION OF PUBLICATIONS

Most groups produce publications of some kind and they are aware of the cost of producing good quality products with relatively short print runs. Recently, PDMHS and the Historical Metallurgy Society jointly published "Mining before Powder", an A4 size 152 page illustrated publication which cost less than £3.00 per copy to produce with a print run of 1200. Obviously with smaller publications the costs would be lower.

PDMHS is willing to consider joint publication of anything connected with mining. They would guarantee 500 copies for their members and other organisations could top this up with copies for their own members, plus some for resale. The advantage of this arrangement is that larger print runs allow better quality at a low price. Alternatively, you could join in an existing arrangement to obtain copies for your own members or even just ask PDMHS for a quote to do one of your own. There is even a suggestion that a national mining journal could be produced once a year with articles from all over the country.

Anyone interested in learning more should contact Lynn Willies, 174 Dale Rd, Matlock Bath, Derbys, DE4 3PS. Tel:- (01629) 584322.

## SNAILBEACH CENTENARY

Saturday 4th March was the centenary of a disaster at Snailbeach Mine, Shropshire, when seven miners died following the breakage of the winding rope in a shaft. Villagers commemorated the event in a number of ways including displays in the village hall which revealed documents, artifacts and photographs which had not been previously known to the mining historians of the area. SCMC members had a stall at the event and took about 250 visitors around Day Level during the weekend.

## MINE SITE PRESERVATION

The South Shropshire District Council is applying for Conservation Area Partnership Schemes for both Tankerville and Grit Mine sites, with both sites possibly being listed. Tankerville is considered to be as archaeologically important as Snailbeach.

At the moment the Tankerville Engine House is in danger of slipping down the shaft. The three engine houses at Grit are also in need of treatment.  
(SCMC)

## PARKSIDE COLLIERY

The concrete headframes of Parkside Colliery were blown up on 9th October 1994. This event marked the end of the last deep pit on the Lancashire Coalfield.  
(SCMC)

## PENDEEN CRAFTS & MINING EXHIBITION

This small mining museum at Pendeen, Cornwall (Grid ref SW459379) houses a large working model of the Crowns section of Botallack Mine. It shows both skip roads in action.  
(SCMC)

## HELP WANTED

1. Mr D J Hunt is undertaking a PhD research project into the stability effect of groundwater recharge upon abandoned coal mine workings. He is looking for information on the location of suitable sites in Nottinghamshire at which to carry out in-situ tests. He is also looking for additional information relating to minewater outfall points, local hydrology etc.

If anyone can help, please contact him at Mineral Resources Engineering Department, Nottingham

University, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD.

2. The following letter has been received from a researcher in the Netherlands.

"The 80km of subterranean limestone quarries in Mount St Peter, near Maastricht are protected as a natural monument. This gives no guarantee that their value as an archive of regional history is being preserved. Status as a Cultural Monument will guarantee the preservation and is thus more desirable.

The Dutch Status of Cultural Monument applies to buildings, or added decorations and ornaments only. It is not possible to label the subterranean limestone quarries as buildings and, therefore, they cannot rank under the Monuments Preservation Law.

I am trying to establish whether there are any subterranean objects in other countries which have a cultural value, and which have been given an official status as Cultural Monuments.

If you know of any such subterranean objects would you please let me know the following:-

- a) the name and location of these objects
- b) the status that they have acquired
- c) the main reason that they gained this status

I am particularly interested in objects that equate to the subterranean limestone quarries but any other example, eg mine or similar example, would be helpful."

If anyone can help, would they please contact Marjan Melkert, H.Goovaertsweg 4, 6212 BX Maastricht, The Netherlands.

## THE WORKING UNDERGROUND WATERWHEEL AT KILLHOPE LEAD MINING CENTRE, WEARDALE

This 18ft diameter water wheel, which was commissioned at the end of last year, was constructed by five trainees from the Industrial Power Group Training Centre. This organisation is part of Rolls Royce PLC. During the summer the visitors to Killhope will be able to go into the mine to see this water wheel in operation. It will be the only working underground water wheel in Britain.  
(Rolls Royce News: R Gosling)

## **COMBE DOWN MINES - A TIME FOR ACTION**

Last Autumn the Bath Chronicle published a supplement to highlight the proposed measures to be taken to protect the village of Combe Down from being damaged by subsidence as a result of mining stone from under the village. The stone was used to build almost all of the famous buildings in Bath. The mines were abandoned about 130 years ago.

The main areas at risk have been assessed as those where there is less than 3 metres of cover to the stone workings.

It has been estimated that it will cost some £21.6m to stabilise the area by pumping PFA into the voids, supplemented by shotcrete as necessary. The proposed use of PFA has prompted a reaction from some of the inhabitants who are concerned about the heavy metals (including arsenic and mercury) which are present in the PFA.

So far, no property has been damaged by wholesale collapse into a mine working. Subsidence that has occurred has been associated with the failure of caps on "air and light" shafts. Even so, there is a reluctance for insurance companies to provide subsidence cover and for mortgagees to finance the purchase of properties in the area in spite of the optimistic statements that are made by local estate agents.

R Gosling

### **NOTES from Ivor Brown**

1. The Government has written off loans of £23.4m made to Carnon Ltd (South Crofty Mine) that had been paid to the Company between 1986 and 1988 to keep miners employed. RTZ have also written off a loan of £7m that was made for a similar purpose. (Planning 8/7/94).

2. As part of the compensation for the loss of British Coal support after privatisation of the Coal Industry, the three "national" coal mining museums, namely Big Pit, Wales; Caphouse, Yorkshire; and the Scottish Mining Museum, have been granted £100,000 each for each of the next three years to allow them to buy in specialised mining assistance.

3. The French Coal Mining film "Germinal" is now available with English sub-titles. This film is based on the Lewarde Mining Museum in northern France and it contains some fantastic mining scenes. The use of flat rope steam powered winding systems is of particular note. It is well worth seeing.

4. "Deep underground nuclear repositories" are the

subject of guidelines recently published by the Government. The guidelines state that developers of such excavations are required to produce statements not only on how they are to be formed and used but also to show how they will be made safe for "perhaps tens of thousands of years". (Planning 2/9/94).

5. Derbyshire County Council has made a grant of £2,000 towards the cost of a search for old iron and coal mining sites in the County, particularly in the Codnor and Ripley areas. The aim of the search is to identify the most appropriate areas that should be protected from opencast coal mining. (Planning 23/9/94).

### **"WELSH GOLD" FLOTATION ON THE LONDON STOCK MARKET**

The market price of the gold produced from the Gwynfynydd Gold Mine, near Dolgellau in Snowdonia, is some three times the London gold price. In order to finance further development of the mine the company, to be known as Welsh Gold, is to be floated on the London stock market. In the prospectus for the flotation, Welsh Gold gives no profit forecast but suggests that the output would increase from the current 980 troy ounces per year to some 2,450 troy ounces per year.

The Gwynfynydd Gold Mine is owned by Roland Phelps who has turned the complex into a major tourist attraction. It is claimed to be the only working gold mine in the UK.

Abstract from Financial Times, 5/2/95.

### **INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON SOUTERRAINS**

This symposium will be held at Maastricht, The Netherlands, from 19th to 25th August 1995. The symposium is all about man made underground structures and there will be a separate theme on each day.

There is a lot of limestone, known as Maastricht, in the Maastricht area. This has been used as building stone for many centuries. The Dutch-Belgian border crosses the area and the history and mining techniques in both countries will be discussed at the symposium.

For further information please contact The International Symposium on Souterrains, c/o P J Orbons, PO Box 1614, NL 6201 BP Maastricht, The Netherlands.

## BULLETIN OF SUBTERRANEA BRITANNICA

The Winter 1994 edition of the Bulletin of Subterranea Britannica contains articles on Underground Farming, The Paris Sewers, Hazards from Abandoned Mine Workings-A European Perspective, Carthouse Quarry Godstone, Subterranean Prague, A Survey of the Iceland Souterrains and The Secondary Use of Subterranean Limestone Quarries around Maastricht.

## GOING UNDERGROUND!

Besides being a question of intent Going Underground is the name of a company that can supply all of your equipment needs for descending into the bowels of the earth.

In addition to selling equipment the company offers a repair and maintenance service for Oldham cap lamps. It also has a hiring service for helmets, belts, caplamps and oversuits.

For further information and a copy of their catalogue please contact Going Underground, 33 Glade Way, Shawbirch, Telford, Shropshire, TF5 0LD. Tel:- Telford (01952) 240765.

## CORNISH ENGINES

Final arrangements are being made for the Trevithick Trust to take over the management of the East pool engines on a short term basis. National Trust members will continue to have access to these engine free of charge. The package also includes Robinson's Engine and Trevithick Cottage but it excludes Levant. Access to Robinson's Engine is not currently available to the public.

The ongoing work at Taylor's is now almost complete. The chimney is being rebuilt, the buildings stabilised, rubbish removed and the creation of footpaths give access to considerable, and dramatic, archaeological remains. Kerrier District Council intends to transfer the ownership of Taylor's Shaft to the National Trust, management of this site will then be carried out by the Trevithick Trust.

## OLWYN GOCH

The Grosvenor Caving Club have, at last, concluded prolonged negotiations with Welsh Water to gain access to the Olgwyn Goch Shaft which lies on the Milwr Tunnel. Although the club now has the right of access, there is still a

considerable amount of safety work to be carried out in the shaft before it can be used on a regular basis.

Access into the shaft and the associated mine workings will be **STRICTLY CONTROLLED** by the Grosvenor Caving Club.

## THE PREHISTORY OF MINING AND METALLURGY

The British Museum and the Early Mines Research Group are to hold a joint conference on the Prehistory of Mining and Metallurgy from 13th -18th September 1995.

The conference will start in London and will then transfer to Bangor, North Wales. The programme will include a number of site visits as well as the presentation of papers relevant to the subject.

For further information, please contact Paul Craddock, Department of Scientific Research, The British Museum, London, WC1B 3DG. Tel:- 0171 323 8797. Fax:- 0171 323 8276.

## ATALAYA TOURS IN 1995

Atalaya Tours are again offering a series of Mining Study Tours to the Iberian Peninsular and Britain during 1995.

The study tours available are:-

22nd-29th April 1995. Rio Tinto and the Iberian Pyrite Belt,  
June 1995. Northern Spain,  
September 1995. Mines of Andalucia and Southern Spain,  
Autumn 1995. Western Britain,

Further information is available from Atalaya Tours Ltd, Ceinionfa, Capel Dewi, Aberystwyth, SY23 3HR. Tel: (01970) 828989.

## IRISH MINING SOCIETY

An Irish Mining Society is about to be formed. More information will be available at the NAMHO Conference.

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MINING HISTORY ORGANISATIONS

Registered Office, c/o Peak District Mining Museum, The Pavilion, South Parade,  
Matlock Bath, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3NR.  
Tel:- Matlock (01629) 583834.  
Registered Charity No 297301  
Chairman:- Dr I J Brown  
Treasurer:- R Gosling  
Secretary:- Mr A Pearce